

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region of said absorbent article; and

N.E. c) a pair of opposed front panels which are refastenably attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint wherein said front panel and said back panel on each side edge of said absorbent chassis are permanently connected together along a side seam to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article.

N.E. 12. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 11 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop fasteners.

N.E. 15. (Amended) A pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article further comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region of said absorbent article;

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are refastenably attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint wherein said front panel and said back panel on each side edge of said absorbent chassis are permanently connected together along a side seam to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article;

d) a fastener located on each of said front panels which is releasably engaged with said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region to provide said refastenable joint; and

e) a releasable bond located on each of said front panels which releasably bonds said front panels to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region to assist in

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maintaining said pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article in said prefastened condition.

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17. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop fasteners.

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22. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein each of said side seams defines a lateral outboard edge of said article.

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26. (Amended) A pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, an absorbent chassis which defines a pair of opposed side edges and a pair of opposed waist edges, wherein said pant-like, disposable absorbent article is made by a process which comprises:

- a) providing a continuous web of interconnected absorbent chassis;
- b) permanently attaching a pair of laterally opposed back panels to said side edges of each of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region to provide a permanent joint;
- c) refastenably attaching a pair of laterally opposed front panels to said side edges of each of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint;
- d) selectively cutting said continuous web of interconnected absorbent chassis into discrete absorbent articles;
- e) folding each of said discrete absorbent articles about a fold line extending in a lateral direction through said crotch region of said article thereby positioning said front panels and said back panels in a facing relationship; and
- f) permanently connecting said front panels and said back panels together along a pair of laterally opposed side seams to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, prefastened, refastenable, disposable absorbent article.

27. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 26 wherein said refastenably attaching includes refastenably engaging a fastener located on said front panels to said exterior surface of each of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region to provide said refastenable joint.

28. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 27 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop fasteners.

29. (Amended) The absorbent article of claim 27 wherein said refastenably attaching includes ultrasonically bonding said front panels to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region to assist said fasteners in providing said refastenable joints.

30. (New) The absorbent article of claim 9 wherein said absorbent chassis comprises:

- a) an outer cover;
- b) a bodyside liner which is connected to said outer cover in a superposed relation; and
- c) an absorbent core disposed between said outer cover and said bodyside liner.

31. (New) The absorbent article of claim 9 wherein said front and back panels are a neck-bonded laminate material.

Remarks

Claims 1-29 are pending in the instant application. Claims 1-8, 20 and 21 have been canceled. The remaining claims have been amended as suggested by the Examiner to correct identified informalities. Claims 30 and 31 were added and generally correspond to the inventions disclosed in canceled claims 2 and 8 respectively. Support for these amendments appears throughout the specification. The Examiner is thanked for her suggestions in this regard. Claims 9, 15, and 26 have been further amended to recite that the absorbent article of the present invention is a prefasted absorbent article. Support for this amendment appears in the specification at page 6, lines 5-16. Claim 15 has been further amended to recite that the absorbent article includes front and back panels. Support for this amendment appears in the specification at page 14, lines 16-31. Finally, claims 9, 15, and 26 have been amended to recite that the front and back panels on each side edge of the absorbent chassis are permanently